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BOSTON CHINATOWN

Inside Chinatown

Greetings. Chinatown is established amidst Boston's financial, retail and theater districts.
While Chinatown's fine restaurants, markets, bakeries, gift shops and cinemas offer Chinese fare to tourists and its people, a health center, school, church, and social organizations provide services to the residents of the community.
Recently, Vietnamese, Laotians and Cambodians have expanded the ethnic composition of the Chinese community.

History. The first Chinese arrived in Boston soon after the American Revolution. Consequently, trade between Boston and China brought Chinese workers to the city's old port. But it was not until 1875 that Chinese immigrants established a permanent community in Boston. After the completion of the Central Pacific and Union Pacific railroad in 1869, Chinese laborers from the west coast began to move eastward in search of employment. As time passed, some of these migrants from the west formed a small Chinese community at the edge of what is now Boston's business district.
This Chinese community was predominantly male. Because the Exclusion Act of 1882 barred Chinese immigrants from entering the country, the community remained small and isolated. Chinatown's population slowly increased as employment opportunities became available after World War II. The community finally grew when immigration laws were liberalized in the mid 1960's.

Food. Bird's nest soup. Barbequed shrimp on sugar cane. Lobster Cantonese style. Chicken in a pot. The choices are as plentiful as are the restaurants in Chinatown. These dishes will leave a lasting impression on anyone's tastebuds.

Shops. Treat yourself to a leisurely afternoon and browse through the stores for clothing, Asian ceramic pieces, jewelry, and cooking utensils. The selection of gifts is as diverse as the community itself.
Come explore the unique spices and sauces, as well as live poultry, fish and lobster which can be found in Chinatown's food markets.

Festivals. Watch the streets come alive during Chinese New Year and the August Moon Festival, the two most popular celebrations in Chinatown. Several members from local martial arts groups don a colorful lion's head and tail for both events. Accompanied by symbolic drum music, the lion dances its way through Chinatown among exploding firecrackers and throngs of people.

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Designed by Eddie Lee
Written by Joyce Woods and Jane Wong

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Photos by Lucy Chen
Photos courtesy of the Sampan
Photos courtesy of Youth Essential Services

BOSTON CHINATOWN

- Yellow shows main routes to Chinatown.
- Blue shows major landmarks.
- Green shows Chinatown.

Enlarged area of Chinatown.

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speak for itself.

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